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FBI Releases 2008 Crime Statistics

Washington, D.C.--According to figures released today by the FBI, the estimated number of violent crimes in the Nation declined for the second year in a row. Property crimes also declined in 2008, marking the sixth straight year the collective estimates for these offenses dropped below the previous year's total.

The statistics show that the estimated volume of violent crimes declined 1.9 percent, and the estimated volume of property crimes decreased 0.8 percent in 2008 when compared with 2007 estimates. The 2008 violent crime rate was 454.5 offenses per 100,000 inhabitants (a 2.7 percent decrease from the 2007 rate), and the property crime rate was 3,212.5 per 100,000 persons (a 1.6 percent decrease from 2007).

The data are presented in the 2008 edition of the FBI's annual publication *Crime in the United States*, a statistical compilation of offense and arrest data as reported by law enforcement agencies voluntarily participating in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program.

The UCR Program compiles offense and arrest data for violent and property crimes. Violent crimes are the offenses of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault; property crimes are the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. (Though the FBI classifies arson as a property crime, it does not estimate arson data because of variations in the level of participation at the agency level. Consequently, arson is not included in the property crime estimate.) The program also collects only arrest data for 21 additional offenses that include all other offenses except traffic violations.

Nearly 17,800 city, county, college and university, state, tribal, and federal agencies participated in the UCR Program in 2008. These agencies represented 94.9 percent of the Nation's population. A summary of the statistics included in *Crime in the United States, 2008* follows:

- Nationwide, there were an estimated 1,382,012 violent crimes in 2008.
- For each of the four violent crime offenses, the 2008 estimates declined when compared with estimates for 2007. The murder and nonnegligent manslaughter estimate dropped 3.9 percent; aggravated assault declined 2.5 percent; forcible rape declined 1.6 percent; and robbery was down 0.7 percent in 2008 when compared with data from 2007.

- Motor vehicle theft was the only property crime to decline in 2008 as the estimate for this offense was down 12.7 percent from 2007. Burglaries rose 2.0 percent, and larceny-thefts increased 0.3 percent in 2008 when compared with data from 2007.
- Collectively, victims of property crime lost an estimated \$17.2 billion.
- According to FBI estimates, law enforcement agencies made 14,005,615 arrests, excluding traffic violations, in 2008.
- In 2008, the arrest rate for violent crimes was 198.2 per 100,000 persons. For property crime, the rate was 565.2 arrests per 100,000 inhabitants.
- For violent crime offenses, law enforcement arrested persons at a rate of 4.3 per 100,000 inhabitants for murder and nonnegligent manslaughter. Arrests for forcible rape occurred at a rate of 7.5 percent per 100,000 persons. For robbery, the rate was 43.6, and for aggravated assault, 142.9.
- Among the property crime offenses, the arrest rate for burglary was 102.3 per 100,000 inhabitants. The arrest rate for larceny-theft was 425.7; for motor vehicle theft, 32.5; and for arson, 4.7.

The 2008 publication also includes data regarding staffing levels for 14,169 city, county, college and university, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies as of October 31, 2008. The agencies reported that they collectively employed 708,569 sworn officers and 315,659 civilians.

Note: **Caution against Ranking**—Each year when *Crime in the United States* is published, some entities use the figures to compile rankings of cities and counties. These rough rankings provide no insight into the numerous variables that mold crime in a particular town, city, county, state, or region. Consequently, they lead to simplistic and/or incomplete analyses that often create misleading perceptions adversely affecting communities and their residents. Valid assessments are possible only with careful study and analysis of the range of unique conditions affecting each local law enforcement jurisdiction. **The data user is, therefore, cautioned against comparing statistical data of individual reporting units from cities, metropolitan areas, states, or colleges or universities solely on the basis of their population coverage or student enrollment.**